

o'clock in the morning. Flaubert and Daudet defended him, Tourgeneff and I attacked him, while Goncourt remained neutral. At other times we took up the subject of the passions, talked of women and love, and on those occasions the waiters looked at us aghast. Then, as Flaubert detested having to walk home alone, I accompanied him through the dark streets, and did not get to bed till three o'clock in the morning, for we halted at the corner of every open space to philosophise."

Meantime the Sunday gatherings at Flaubert's had become far less gloomy. The author of "Madame Bovary" had gradually accustomed himself to the new order of things, and when he removed from the Rue Murillo to the Faubourg St. Honore\*, a number of admirers surrounded him, as well as his half-dozen chosen intimates.<sup>1</sup> On some occasions as many as twenty visitors assembled in his half-furnished white and gold drawing-room, which from three till six o'clock became full of tobacco-smoke, everybody except Zola freely indulging in pipe, cigar, or cigarette. He had ceased smoking under compulsion, in his days of dire necessity, and though no such compulsion existed now, even Flaubert seldom succeeded in forcing a pipe upon him.

In his account of those Sunday gatherings, he allows us

to understand that the speech often suggested  
the style of  
Eabelais, perhaps even of Villon, that spades  
were called  
plumply spades, which will not surprise those  
who know  
the Cambronesque epithet that Flaubert —  
the stylist —

<sup>1</sup> Alexis mentions among the frequent visitors whom he  
met there : Fran-  
cois Copped, Catulle Mendes, Maurice Bouchor, Philippe  
Burty, J. K. Huys-  
mans, Henri Ce"ard, Marius Boux, Le"on Hennique, Bergerat,  
Toudouze, Dr.  
Pouchet, and Oharpentier, the publisher. At intervals came  
Taine, Renan,  
Maxima Ducamp, and Maurice Sand.